

Fairy Tail 75

Chapter 75: The Seto Group

Earth Land, Ishgar, Kingdom of Fiore, Akane Beach.

January, x781.

Shortly after meeting with Makarov, Marin traveled back to Hargeon, awaiting her father's return. Just as the Fairy Tail wizards suggested, she intended to join a guild. And although it was never mentioned, the guild Marin intended to join was Fairy Tail.

After that, time passed peacefully, as peacefully as time could pass for a group of magical mercenaries, with Marin coming to visit from time to time. And every time she did, she shared books from her erotic novel collection with Erza, who really seemed to enjoy them.

Eventually, the time for the next S-Class Promotion Exam came around. This time, the candidates were Cana, Ultear, Erza, Bickslow, Fried, Evergreen, Mest, and Mirajane.

Naturally, when Makarov announced the participants, everyone was surprised to find out that Elicia, Macao, and Wkaba were not among them. Then, he surprised them even more by promoting Elicia without an exam this year. And the reason was quite simple.

Over the past year, Elicia took two quests whose terms were intentionally misrepresented. One because the client did not have the money for an S-Class quest. And one from a rival clothing manufacturer trying to get rid of the competition.

It was a good thing for all involved that the second plan failed. Otherwise, Alfonzo would have become a dark wizard wanted around Ishgar for mass murder.

It was lucky for the examinees that Elicia, although she had been promoted to S-Class, did not participate in the Promotion Exam as one of the examiners. In the end, Erza was the one who claimed the title as Fairy Tail's newest S-Class wizard.

Today, Alfonzo was driving the Escalade, with Elicia in the passenger seat and Erza riding in the back, toward Akane Beach. Although Fiore's most popular resort was housed on the beach, the trio would be avoiding it for the time being. They had picked up a quest from a client who lived on the beach quite a distance from the resort.

"Hey, Fonzie?" Elicia asked while looking out the Escalade's window.

"What's up?" Alfonzo asked in reply.

"After the quest is complete, can we spend a few days at the resort?" Elicia asked.

Hearing that question, Erza raised her head from the book she was reading in the back seat with her eyes sparkling a bit, waiting for Alfonzo's answer.

"I don't see why we couldn't." Alfonzo replied, gaining a smile from both Elicia and Erza. "I mean, relaxing after a tough job is what you're supposed to do, right?"

"Anyway, do any of you know about the client for this quest?" Erza asked after the excitement from a trip to a beachside resort died down.

"You mean the Seto Group?" Elicia asked. "Aren't they a trading group?"

"Well, not just a trading group." Alfonzo replied. "They also mine underwater resources. In fact, quite a bit of the Kingdom's Aqua Stone comes from the materials that they mine."

"I see." Erza replied. "Then, they should have some powerful wizards on their payroll if I'm not guessing wrong, right?"

"Yeah..." Alfonzo said while narrowing his eyes.

"Do you think this could be a trap?" Elicia asked, a bit more wary after dealing with the trap from that clothing company.

"No, I don't think so." Alfonzo replied. "But if they're asking for help from the guilds, then this may be a tougher quest than we expected."

"I was thinking the same." Erza replied.

"Maybe we should reconsider this quest." Elicia said, having a bad feeling after knowing the details about the client.

"Nah, don't worry about it, Lici." Alfonzo said with a confident smile on his face. "We have three S-Class wizards here. And since I've been taking on S-Class quests for a year, without a single failed quest, we'll be fine. We just have to be careful. But that's nothing new for us, right?"

Although the uneasy feeling Elicia was having did not go away, she had to admit there was some truth behind what Alfonzo said. As long as they proceeded with caution, they should be fine. However, Alfonzo's confidence in himself was a bit overboard in her opinion, but she kept that thought to herself.

"Anyway." Elicia said after the trio chatted about the quest for a little while longer. "Things aren't looking good for Macao and Enno. From what I hear, she's fed up with how little time Macao spends at home ever since Romeo was born."

"I heard the same thing." Erza said, putting a book mark in her novel.

"It's such a shame, too." Elicia said while shaking her head gently. "Macao loves them so much, he even stopped playing with other women completely after meeting Enno."

"Yeah, but he spends too much time working and Enno can't take the lonely nights." Erza added.

Like that, the girls continued to gossip. Meanwhile, Alfonzo could only smile wryly.

'Girls will be girls.' Alfonzo thought as he focused on the road. 'Gossiping is in their DNA.'

Eventually, around sunset, the trip came to an end when they arrived at a large eastern mansion. After showing the gate guards the quest sheet with Makarov's stamp, they were allowed inside and directed to park near the outer wall.

"Wow, this place is huge." Elicia said as she stepped down from the passenger seat and looked around the area.

"Indeed." Erza replied. "And the architecture is quite impressive as well."

"Yeah." Alfonzo said as he also looked around. "I wouldn't be surprised if this place served as both a home and the HQ for the Seto Group."

"Your intuition is rather impressive." An unfamiliar male voice said from the direction of the mansion.

Immediately after hearing it, the trio looked in the direction of the voice. When they did, they saw a tall, muscular, tan-skinned man with an afro hairstyle and a thin mustache wearing a black suit, white dress shirt, a purple tie, and sunglasses walking towards them.

"That just might be the second most handsome man I've ever seen." Erza muttered after looking at the new arrival.

"Really? And who is the most handsome?" Elicia asked playfully.

Although Erza did not respond, Elicia did not miss the quick glance she gave to the last member of their three-person team.

Alfonzo, on the other hand, was looking at the man who just spoke with curiosity and a bit of confusion in his gaze.

'Why does this guy look so familiar?' Alfonzo thought to himself. 'I know I've never met him, but I feel like I know him.'

"Am I right to assume that you three are S-Class wizards from Fairy Tail?" The man asked after drawing near.

"That's right." Alfonzo replied with a nod. Then, he extended his right hand as he continued. "I'm Alfonzo Marcus."

"You can call me Masa." The man, Masa, replied as he grasped Alfonzo's outstretched hand. "Your reputation as a magical item crafter is just as loud as your reputation as a wizard. Especially after you and Master Nell Goldstein created those magical household appliances."

While Alfonzo chatted with Masa, he nodded internally, finally understanding why Masa looked so familiar.

'The Seto Group and a handsome guy with an Afro.' Alfonzo thought to himself. 'It's gotta be them, right? But if it is, that means the top-ranking members of the Seto Group more than likely aren't human, right?'

"Anyway, we should head inside." Masa said after exchanging pleasantries for a bit longer. "The boss is expecting you."

With that, Masa led the trio toward the mansion. While Erza followed him without an inkling of his true identity, Alfonzo and Elicia exchanged glances as they walked.

'So, Lici picked up on it too, huh?' Alfonzo thought too himself. 'But if they really are who... or rather what I think they are, this quest just got a whole lot more interesting.'

'That bad feeling I had earlier just got a whole lot worse.' Elicia thought after making eye contact with Alfonzo. 'If they're this world's version of that Seto Group, then the fact that we're supposed to eliminate a sea serpent is even more serious than we initially thought. I really hope nothing goes wrong.'

As they walked, the group of four eventually entered the mansion, passing many black suited men along the way. However, not everyone they came across was dressed that way. There was one, a tall, well-built man with exceptionally sharp teeth, blond hair, and dull eyes wearing a grey tracksuit and white sneaker like-shoes.

"Hey Masa? You brought food?" The blond man asked while sizing up the three S-Class wizards.

"No, Fujishiro." Masa replied. "They're here to complete the boss's request."

"Tch!" The blond man, Fujishiro, clicked his tongue. "If they take on that quest, they'll die anyway? Might as well let me eat them?"

"Did he just say he wanted to eat us?" Erza asked while narrowing her eyes.

"No... you must be mistaken." Masa said while glaring at Fujishiro sternly. "Your mind must be playing tricks on you. You're probably just tired. The trip from here to Magnolia is a long one, after all."

After responding to Erza's question, Masa grabbed Fujishiro and pulled him a short distance away. Then, very animatedly, he started scolding the blond man in a hushed tone. Meanwhile, the three Fairy Tail wizards could only watch.

"That was Shark Fujishiro, right?" Elicia said, whispering so that only Alfonzo could hear her.

"Yeah, I'm pretty sure it was." Alfonzo replied, just as quietly.

"Fonzie, I really have a bad feeling about this quest." Elicia said in a nervous tone. "They should be experts at underwater combat. But they called in some outside wizards for this quest."

"There's nothing to worry about." Alfonzo said as he started combing his fingers through Elicia's hair. "We've been training for most of our lives. We'll handle this just like we have every other quest."

Though Elicia's uneasy feeling still had not gone away, Alfonzo's confident reminder of how hard they had trained over the years calmed her down quite a bit.

Meanwhile, Erza watched the couple with an envious gaze she tried, and failed, to hide from them. And after seeing Erza's gaze, Elicia smiled internally.

'Another fruit almost ripe for the picking.' Elicia thought to herself. 'Just so long as nothing happens on this quest, anyway.'

Just as those thoughts ran through Elicia's head, Masa sent Fujishiro to complete a task somewhere else. Then, he returned to the group.

"Please excuse the delay." Masa said politely. "Now, we shouldn't keep the boss waiting."

Simply nodding in reply, Alfonzo, Elicia, and Erza decided not to comment on the fact that they had nothing to do with why their trip to see "the boss" was delayed. Instead, they just followed Masa through the corridors of the mansion.

"Oh, Miss Taylor." Masa said as the group walked.

"Just Elicia." Elicia said with a smile. "Calling me Miss Taylor makes me sound old."

"As you wish, Miss Elicia." Masa said without missing a beat. "Might you consider working with the Seto Group when it comes to shipping your products. Not only do we operate in several countries in Ishgar, but we also operate on the two other continents as well."

Hearing that, Elicia's eyes lit up. While she was excited to have her clothing reach more of the world, she was still rational enough to not jump into anything on impulse.

"That's something I'd definitely be willing to consider." Elicia replied with a wide smile. "When I go back home, I'll talk to the people who handle my contracts and stuff like that. Then, I'll be sure to get back to the Seto Group."

"Then, the Seto Group will await your response." Masa replied without losing his polite tone.

On the inside, however, Masa was impressed.

'Usually young people like her would jump at an opportunity like that.' Masa thought to himself as he continued walking. 'But she had the foresight to wait until she talked to her legal team first. It seems the boss won't be able to get as many benefits as he thought he would from this deal.'

Though Masa could never know about Elicia's past life, it was no surprise that Elicia did not lose herself in the offer. She had been through many of the ups and downs associated with getting her products to consumers in her past life. So, she had an idea of what to expect when working with the distributors.

A few moments later, with Masa in the lead, Alfonzo, Elicia, and Erza stopped in front of a large, exquisitely carved wooden door.

Knock! *Knock!*

"Who is it?" A deep, rough male voice asked from the other side of the door.

"Boss, it's me, Masa." Masa replied. "The wizards from Fairy Tail are here."

"Bring them in." The male voice ordered from the other side of the door.

"Right away, Boss." Masa answered as he put his hand on the doorknob. Then, he looked at the trio of Fairy Tail wizards, pushing the door open as he continued. "Right this way."